

pursuit of the practice, and the recoveries which have taken place ought more properly to be considered as having occurred *in spite*, than in consequence, of the treatment.

For the truth of the preceding remarks, I need only refer your readers to the various cases recorded in the late numbers of your own journal—temporary amendments followed by a more speedy death than would otherwise probably have taken place, is the history of nearly all; and I must think the exceptions are fewer than would have taken place under a different plan of treatment. But though it appears to me that a wrong application has been made of the knowledge which we have attained, (through the labours of Dr. O'Shaughnessy in particular,) of the chemical alterations sustained by the blood in the course of an attack of cholera, I am very far from undervaluing such information: on the contrary, I consider it as affording a very useful indication in the treatment of the disease; and if the crude notion of supplying the deficient materials immediately to the circulating mass appear to me unphilosophical, far otherwise is the intention of introducing it through the medium of the absorbents and assimilative process. Such an indication may, with strict propriety, form a part of a rational and philosophical plan of cure. But it may be asked, how can it be accomplished? I answer, by introducing into the stomach and intestines the same matter which has been so profusely thrown into the veins. Four pounds of warm water, with saline and alkaline substances in solution, may be injected at one time into the intestines, and large quantities of gruel, salted in the taste of the patient, may be drank with little or no hazard of being rejected, especially if the gastric and intestinal irritation be previously allayed by a dose of calomel and opium. This fact I have satisfactorily put to the test three several times during the present week. The first patient, (a man about sixty years of age,) in whom the vomiting and purging of enormous quantities of rice water had gone on for seven hours, whose extremities were blue and wrinkled, and whose pulse was totally imperecible, rallied to such an extent as, but for his advanced age, (which I consider a perfect barrier to recovery in such severe cases,) would have warranted good hopes of success; and in the other two, (both females,) whose cases were less severe, though sufficiently marked, convalescence has been the result. I would suggest, therefore, in addition to the principles of treatment whieb it was my endeavour to establish in my lately published Essay on Cholera, that the deficient ingredients of the blood—those which have been removed by the profuse discharges which characterize the disease—should be supplied to the circulation, not by direct injection into the veins, but through the natural processes of absorption and assimilation. As I conceive it is the direct tendency of the treatment recommended in the work referred to, to restore organic function, I cannot consider it a valid argument against this practice that no such processes as absorption and assimilation can go on during the continuance of the deranged action which constitutes the disease. It is true that our attention must be directed to the twofold object of checking this action and of restoring the havoc it has made on the stamina of life: the first may be done with considerable certainty; but in the second appear difficulties which I fear neither the venous injections nor the substitute I suggest, will be able always to overcome.

*31. On Cold Affusions in the Treatment of Cholera.* By WILLIAM AINSWORTH, Esq.—One of the physicians of the Cholera Hospital at Berlin, in writing upon this subject, says, “in those living corpses which are struck with asphyxia, lying cold and without any pulse, external and internal stimuli cease to be so, inasmuch as the debilitated asphyxiated frame cannot in its turn act upon them: no steam apparatus, however vaunted, no warm bathing, no friction, no excitement, is sufficient in these cases.” And this is what I am sure every person who has seen the disease will coincide in. Though produced from internally outwards, and not externally acting inwards, asphyxia pestilenta bears a strong relation to death by frost, in which there is an icy coldness of the surface, a

want of pulse, and great congestion of the central parts. In these cases we use frictions of cold snow, &c. until a gradual warmth is restored; and it is on the same principle that sudden cold affusions are indicated in cholera. So forcibly did this strike medical men in this country as a neglected remedial measure, that when the *Berlin Cholera Gazette*, which contained the notice of its successful employment, was made known, every writer was anxious to show that he had himself previously advocated its adoption.

The patient is placed in an empty and dry bathing vessel or tub, and several buckets of cold water are poured on him, while the regions of the stomach and back are subjected to a kind of shampooing or friction; and this process must be repeated if the urgency of the circumstances requires it. No physic is given, and cold water is allowed for beverage. If the pulse revives, the affusions are continued in a tepid bath, and the patient is put to bed, where perspiration is excited by gentle frictions with cold flannels. It must be kept carefully in mind, that cold affusions are only applicable to the second period of the disease, and not to the first; and it is not a universal remedy, but can only be used in particular cases. To secure the convalescence of the patient, it is only necessary that he should be carefully watched, and all symptoms of returning heat and vitality, or recurrence of the usual secretions, be assisted by the exhibition of warm restoratives and gentle aperients, taking care to avoid local inflammation.

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#### MISCELLANEOUS.

32. *Medical Attendance ought not to be Gratuitous.*—“The daily occupation of the medical man is at once the work of public humanity and of personal profit. His task and duty is to do good, to stand by the sick, to cheer the conscious sufferer from vicious indulgence, and to administer solace to the mind, and ease to the body. In the day of battle, the medical man endeavours to save the life which the soldier destroys; and when a national pestilence is abroad, the medical man is chiefly exposed to the pest while watching and learning its nature and treatment. He always performs the work of charity, because he gains his daily bread by being charitable.

“A false notion is now afloat concerning the humanity of medical men. While a disease is threatening to infest our capital, public authorities are wisely convened to forestall and prevent its ravages among the dark and dirty dwellings of the poor; and the poorer people are cleansed and cheered according to the active and diligent instructions of their alarmed superiors. A general feeling of humanity is produced and enforced by private apprehensions. Sobriety, one of the first of Christian virtues, is now proclaimed, not by the voice of wisdom, but by the shout of calamity. In the discharge of this novel duty, the medical man is called upon to take his part; but his part is to be discharged, not in anticipating the arrival of the disease, but in meeting it when it is arrived. He is to hold himself in readiness to rise by night and by day, to enter the houses of the poor, to detect, to touch, to handle, and to treat, a loathsome sickness, and to lean over the bed, or to tarry by its side, till safety or death shall have ensued. If there be any contagion or infection, he is exposed to the baneful influence; if there be any hazard of health, he is open to the obvious danger. We doubt not the moral energy and the professional avidity of any medical practitioner in the encountering of a new disease; the eagerness with which the philosophic physician would hasten, any hour, to survey, perchance to understand and to cure a spreading evil fatal to the lives of men; but no man is justified in wantonly exposing his person to mischief; and every master of a family is bound to consider those who depend upon him for support. The danger may be advertured upon, but only with a prospect of a fair remuneration; and those authorities which require the medical man to serve for nothing, dictate an act of humanity.